

**Review of Costs to Provide Service to Limited
English Proficiency Students**

**Report to
Commissioner Susan Gendron
Maine Department of Education & Cultural Services**

**Prepared by
Dr. David L. Silvernail
Director
Maine Education Policy Research Center
University of Southern Maine Office**

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David L. Silvernail
Director

Maine Education Policy
Research Institute

Beginning in 2005-06, Maine implemented a new school funding formula entitled Essential Programs and Services (EPS). A key provision of EPS is the recognition that the cost of providing education programs and services may be more for some children than for other students. Traditionally, Maine’s funding formula only included adjustments for educating children with special needs. One group recognized in the new formula is Limited English Proficiency (LEP) children. That is to say, EPS is designed to provide SAUs more funds to help schools help LEP children achieve Maine’s learning results.

The EPS model utilizes a weighting system to calculate the additional costs for LEP children. Based on the analysis of actual LEP related costs submitted by SAUs and approved by MDOE, a weighting matrix was developed for three different LEP enrollment groups found in Maine’s school administrative units. This weighting matrix appears in Table 1. For 2005-06

**Table 1
2005-06 EPS Weight Matrix for LEP Children**

	Number of LEP Children		
	1-15	16-250	251+
Weight	0.50	0.30	0.60

these weights with one additional adjustment, were used in calculating EPS allocations. The additional adjustment, a one year adjustment approved by the Legislature, was as follows:

“...for fiscal year 2005-06 only, a small administrative unit that receives an allocation for limited English proficiency students and that has more than 15 and fewer than 26 limited English

proficiency students is eligible for an adjustment to its allocation for limited English proficiency students that is the difference between the amount that the school unit would have received under the calculation described in paragraph B (i.e., the weights in Table 1) and the amount that is calculated when the school unit receives for the first 15 students a weight of .50 instead of .30 as otherwise required under Paragraph B. This paragraph is repealed June 30, 2006.” (Ch. 606B, MRSA, Sec. 15675)

In approving this one year adjustment, the Education Committee requested a review of the LEP component of EPS, based on the most recent data. Specifically, the committee requested the following:

Review of the most recent data available related to the costs borne by school administrative units that are providing services to limited English proficiency students. The Commissioner may consult with the Maine Educational Policy Research Institute within the University of Southern Maine to conduct this review. (PL 05 c.12 (LD 468), Sec. UU-7)

Accordingly, MEPRI conducted this analysis using the most recent two-year data available for approved SAU costs related to LEP. The updated analysis resulted in a new weighting matrix as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Preliminary Updated EPS Weight Matrix for LEP Children

	<u>Number of LEP Children</u>		
	1-15	16-250	251+
Weight	0.60	0.30	0.30

A comparison of the two weighted matrices revealed:

1. The new weights present the same problem as the original matrix for SAUs with more than 15 and fewer than 26 LEP children (i.e., a decline in LEP allocations).
2. The weight declined for the largest group (i.e., 251+ LEP children) because it appears in these SAUs regular per pupil expenditures have increased more than LEP expenditures in recent years.

These two findings suggested additional analyses needed to be undertaken, and these analyses surfaced new issues related to determining LEP allocations. First, a comparison of SAU data revealed considerable variance in SAU costs, even when comparing two or more SAUs with the same or similar numbers of LEP children. Some examples appear in Table 3, and similar data is reported for all SAUs with LEP children in Appendix A. As may be seen for the Table 3 information, some SAUs are spending considerably more than others for the same number of LEP children.

Table 3

District	No. of 2004-05 LEP Students	2004-05 LEP Expenditures
CSD914 – Great Salt Bay	1	\$30,502
SAD3 – Unity	1	\$2,795
Yarmouth	1	\$400
5		
SAD35 – Eliot	5	\$26,530
Gorham	5	\$7,825
13		
Union 7 – Saco	13	\$47,002
SAD57 – Waterboro	13	\$24,490
36		
Scarborough	36	\$147,771
SAD71 – Kennebunk	37	\$62,150

Second, although some of the differences in SAU expenditures may be attributable to differences in LEP needs, an analysis of expenditures yielded what appear to be differences in program staffing approaches among some SAUs. For example, SAD3 provided staffing for its 1 LEP child through \$2,795 in salaries and benefits for education technicians, while CSD914 provided programming for its 1 LEP child through \$13,218 in teacher salaries and benefits and \$17,284 in education technician salaries and benefits. In the case of Freeport (LEP = 18 students), all of the program costs are associated with teacher salaries and benefits, while program costs for SAD47 (LEP = 22 students) are for education technician salaries and benefits only and for contracted services.

Third, a review of Maine Department of Education (MDOE) rules and regulations for approving LEP costs revealed the State does not have any recommended guidelines for staffing and providing services in effective LEP programs. For example, there are no guidelines for appropriated teacher-student and teacher aide-student ratios in LEP programs. SAUs just submit LEP expenditures for LEP programs and services, and the State approves all personnel expenditures for certified teachers, and education technicians working with certified teachers.

Four, MDOE only approves direct services salaries, benefits, and contracted services. No other expenses associated with providing LEP programming and services are approved. A preliminary accounting for two of the larger LEP programs indicate these additional expenses may range from 40-60% above approved cost.

These four major issues, coupled with findings related to the calculation of an updated weighting matrix suggest the LEP component of the EPS needs further analysis and refinement. Accordingly, the following is recommended for 2006-07:

1. The original weighting matrix be used in calculating 2006-07 LEP allocations;
2. The 2005-06 allocation adjustment be continued through 2006-07;

3. A new LEP component be developed for implementation in the 2007-08 EPS funding formula.

Approval of these recommendations would provide continued recognition and funding for an LEP adjustment in the new EPS funding formula, and provide time to refine the adjustment for future years.

Appendix A

SAU Code	District	LEP Students 2004-05	LEP Total Expenditure 2004-05
910	CSD # 10 - Maranacook	1	\$7,927
914	CSD 14 - Great Salt Bay	1	\$30,502
137	Easton	1	\$8,910
169	Glenburn	1	\$1,076
189	Harmony	1	\$3,060
503	SAD 3 - Unity	1	\$2,795
553	SAD 53 - Pittsfield	1	\$2,782
439	Union 52 - Vasselboro	1	\$6,165
60	Union 93 - Blue Hill	1	\$20,020
491	Yarmouth	1	\$400
65	Bucksport	2	\$5,000
528	SAD 28 - Camden	2	\$2,200
547	SAD 47 - Oakland	2	\$2,500
550	SAD 50 - Thomaston	2	\$13,338
363	Union 42 - Readfield	2	\$1,375
420	Union 92 - Surry	2	\$28,390
305	Union 122 - New Sweden	2	\$5,354
919	CSD 19 - Five Towns	3	\$10,582
568	SAD 68 - Dover-Foxcroft	3	\$14,391
260	Union 42 - Manchester	3	\$2,392
94	Union 52 - China	3	\$11,967
53	Brewer	4	\$3,800
144	Ellsworth	4	\$7,397
572	SAD 72 - Fryeburg	4	\$20,005
490	Union 47 - Woolwich	4	\$32,206
401	Union 74 - South Bristol	4	\$29,349

324	Union 87 Orono	4	\$14,307
228	Union 92 - Lamoine	4	\$23,328
903	CSD 3 - Boothbay Harbor	5	\$60,243
171	Gorham	5	\$7,825
505	SAD 5 - Rockland	5	\$24,596
509	SAD 9 - Farmington	5	\$16,063
535	SAD 35 - Eliot	5	\$26,530
481	Union 52 - Winslow	5	\$17,632
30	Bath	6	\$33,040
75	Cape Elizabeth	6	\$30,062
277	Millinockett	6	\$11,567
506	SAD 6 - Buxton	6	\$33,922
515	SAD 15 - Gray	6	\$32,436
551	SAD 51 - Cumberland	6	\$37,315
321	Old Town	8	\$17,380
534	SAD 34 - Belfast	8	\$30,500
223	Kittery	9	\$22,187
554	SAD 54 - Skowhegan	9	\$83,233
151	Falmouth	10	\$52,276
492	York	10	\$20,900
557	SAD 57 - Waterboro	13	\$24,490
374	Union 7 - Saco	13	\$47,002
918	CSD 18 - Wells	14	\$35,343
160	Freeport	18	\$46,630
478	Windham	21	\$62,996
537	SAD 37 - Harrington	22	\$23,059
575	SAD 75 - Topsham	26	\$79,089
560	SAD 60 - North Berwick	27	\$46,875

383	Scarborough	36	\$147,771
571	SAD 71 - Kennebunk	37	\$62,150
40	Biddeford	41	\$83,350
465	Westbrook	45	\$106,214
27	Bangor	48	\$155,203
63	Brunswick	50	\$69,883
552	SAD 52 - Turner	64	\$160,086
256	Madawaska	67	\$80,113
403	South Portland	67	\$167,610
21	Augusta	70	\$184,830
20	Auburn	97	\$257,811
381	Sanford	103	\$256,582
524	SAD 24 - Van Buren	107	\$83,971
233	Lewiston	337	\$348,858
353	Portland	1020	\$3,067,737
	Totals	2527	\$6,466,879